I am against eliminating Morse Proficiency testing from the General and Extra licensing requirements. The written exams for all classes of license are too easy. The correct answers to most questions can be arrived at by exercising common sense. Answers to technical questions can easily be memorized, as the question pools are made public. It seems as though the only work that one must do to get an amateur radio license is to learn Morse code. This petition addresses issues of homeland security and the "expansion of the existing reservoir within the amateur radio service of trained operators, technicians and electronics experts". Making it easier to obtain and/or upgrade an amateur radio license is not going to expand the existing reservoir within the amateur radio service of trained operators, technicians and electronics experts. On the contrary, such an action will only attract the non-technical and those who know little or nothing about electronics to the amateur radio service. Dumbing down amateur radio will serve no constructive purpose.

In a day and age where Morse code is no longer the cutting edge, or even the norm for radio communications, it still serves a purpose in the amateur radio service. Morse proficiency promotes homebrewing of radio equipment. CW radio equipment is simpler and more economical to build than SSB equipment. Building working radio equipment enables one to learn about radio and electronics with hands-on experience. Once the homebrewer gets his/her feet wet building CW equipment, that person is able to graduate to more complicated things like SSB, digital, etc. Homebrewing a simple CW transceiver starts an amateur off in the direction of further experimentation. If we amateurs are to develop new technologies, as we did in the past, we must crawl before we can walk. Homebrewing CW radio gear is the first step in that process. Successfully building a first radio sparks a thirst for experimentation. Without CW proficiency, there is no incentive to homebrew a CW radio. Why build one if you can't use it?

Respectfully Yours,

Mark M. Oring
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